

Caring for Older Australians  
Productivity Commission  
GPO Box 1428  
Canberra City ACT 2601

To Whom It May Concern

Re: Submission - Inquiry into Caring for Older Australians

I manage a day care and respite centre for the frail aged. We receive funds from the National Respite for Carers Program to provide day respite, overnight respite and respite for employed carers.

I wish to make the following points based on my experience in providing respite services to informal carers:

- The importance of respite for carers should not be underestimated when planning aged care reforms, whether it be day respite, overnight cottage respite, in-home respite (including overnight) or respite in a residential facility.
- Respite for carers deserves a higher profile in the community. This would encourage existing carers to utilise services without feeling guilty that they had failed in their caring role. It would encourage carers to start using a respite service before a crisis occurs. It would allow people considering taking on the role of an informal carer to do so with the knowledge that respite services are available.
- Transporting people to a centre-based respite service or travel costs for staff providing in-home respite is a huge problem for rural agencies.
- 63 days respite is not enough respite for someone caring for a high-needs care recipient at home i.e. someone with Alzheimer's disease.
- The extra community packages (CACP, EACH, EACH-D) are working well in keeping people at home for longer but have created a need for more overnight respite. Our cottage respite service has a waiting list.

Yours sincerely,  
Christine Martin  
Killara Adult Day Care and Respite Centre Manager  
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17 March, 2011